

Adult
Literacy
Resource
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SABES
Greater
Boston
Regional
Support
Center



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all write news

LOOKING AT SEPTEMBER 11TH ...AND BEYOND

Everyone is confronting the implications of the events of September 11, and adult basic education teachers are certainly wrestling with many issues related to these events in their classrooms. In an effort to share what is happening locally, the A.L.R.I. sent out an e-mail message to several hundred area practitioners, soliciting stories of what's been happening in their classes. Here are the responses we received. On page 8 can be found a list of just a few of the many resources available to teachers who may be looking for help, especially in relation to working with students on tolerance, stereotyping, and related issues. (Please also watch for the next issue of Field Notes, scheduled to appear in early December, which will also include articles and resources focused on these events and their aftermath.)

In the Classroom

I teach ESL at the Asian American Civic Association (AACA) in Chinatown near downtown Boston. My students at the time of 9/11—primarily Cantonese Chinese but also two Spanish-speaking women, a woman from Burma and another from Ethiopia—only wanted to talk about the events in New York City and Washington, DC. Most of my students also religiously “read” the easily-available *Metro* newspaper, meaning that they generally just look at the photos and perhaps decipher the captions.

Just after 9/11, during the final days of the last teaching cycle, I decided to focus on this subject, although I would have preferred not to discuss 9/11 with the class because I felt too overwhelmed and upset. My students, however, either wouldn't or couldn't discuss anything else. So I dropped what I had planned to wrap up the cycle, and tried to deal with 9/11 in the classroom using the *Metro*, because most of the students are also quite anxious to learn how to understand English-language newspapers. I asked the students to pick one article that interested them—even just a very short

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THINKING AND TALKING ABOUT LEARNING WITH ESOL STUDENTS

by Rebecca Pomerantz

[A few years ago Rebecca Pomerantz, then an ESOL teacher at the Jamaica Plain Community Centers Adult Learning Program and now a teacher at International Institute of Boston, participated in a group of practitioners conducting teacher inquiry projects derived from the concept of Multiple Intelligences. This report on her project was originally written for a companion booklet to the Adult ESOL Curriculum Frameworks.—Ed.]

My class at JPALP met three evenings, totalling eight hours every week. Many of the students had been in this Level One class since September or October (about eight months), but several new students at various levels had arrived recently. All were immigrants or refugees and most had been in Boston for several years (living in one of the southern neighborhoods). They were from Africa, Latin American and the Caribbean, with no one group in the majority, though about half were Muslim. Their ages ranged from 18 to about 55. Several students had from zero to three years of formal education in their own countries.

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Please share this newsletter
with others at your program.
The deadline for submitting
material for the next issue is:
Dec. 15.

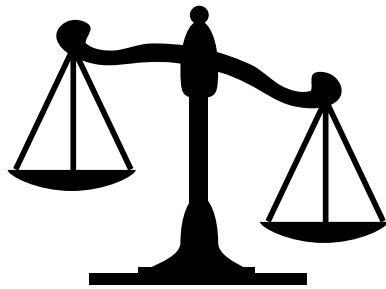
Looking at September 11th...and Beyond

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“blurb”—read it after class, and then try to explain the story in a small group the following day, striving to ensure that everyone in their group understood the gist of the article.

Many of them had trouble with this assignment, but most of them gamely took on the task, with varying degrees of success. A few went as far as to write out a brief summary of their understanding of the chosen article, to which they referred while trying to explain the text to their group mates.

Even those students who hadn't read an article prior to class, nonetheless came in the next day and struggled through an article with the help of their classmates, working together to understand the text. Overall the students were absorbed in the



task, given their overwhelming need to fathom 9/11, as well as their strong interest in decoding the newspaper. The exercise seemed to help them psychologically, allowing them to air their thoughts and concerns while still working in English.

One student chose the daily piechart located in the lower lefthand corner of the *Metro*'s front page. She probably picked the chart because it had limited text and looked deceptively simple. It was a surprisingly difficult chart to decipher, even for me as a native-English speaker. While trying to figure out the piechart and simultaneously explaining it to the students, I came to realize that the chart represented the groups of people or countries whom Americans most feared might attack the U.S. with nuclear missiles. According to the chart, the most feared group is terrorists, with China a close second, followed by a couple of other categories.

I suddenly found myself in the very awkward position—as an American—of trying to explain extemporaneously to a group of mostly Chinese immigrants, who are good natured, hardworking, law-abiding, and extremely socially-oriented (when compared to the stereotypical independent and autonomous American ideal), the possible reasons why many Americans fear that China, my students' beloved home country, might lob nuclear missiles our way.

Unfortunately, because this subject came up on the last day of class, I didn't get the chance to allow the students to fully discuss and evaluate—in the context of the safety of the classroom, with me as an American “guide”—this issue of Americans' strong fear of China, which obviously must be of great concern to the students as Chinese immigrants.

—*Nikki Jordan, ESOL teacher,
Asian American Civic Association*

We did spend a great deal of time in class on September 12 (our class meets M, W, F) sharing feelings, concerns, and information about what had happened on September 11. I brought in several newspapers. We looked at the headlines and the pictures. Students asked about words they didn't understand—tragedy, collapse, terror, terrorism, terrorists. Since most of the students in this class are mothers, we spent a lot of time talking about how we can help our children to feel safe and to understand what happened. Barbara Meltz's column in the *Globe* gave some useful information. Our writing assignment for that week was The Events of September 11. We also reviewed safety procedures in our building and talked about fire drills.

—*Jane Ravid, ESOL teacher,
Jewish Vocational Service*

We've had a lot of student writings which we're putting together into a special edition of our newspaper. These include: writings to a couple of Muslim women students who were uneasy about going outside, reflections on the tragedy itself, writing on how the ESL students feel about seeing the flag everywhere, what the impact of a drop in air travel would mean (aside from the obvious travel, many of our ESL students work in hotels, at the airport, in restaurants). I've also spent some time in several class sessions working with a worksheet on interpreting political cartoons and cartoons taken from a site that I turned up searching on political cartoons (<http://pc99.detnews.com/aaec/>), which has been a nice way to focus our discussions.

—*Dulany Alexander, ESOL teacher,
Operation Bootstrap*

Like everywhere, the events of September 11th have had a great impact on the staff and students of the Notre Dame Education Center in South Boston. Many of our students



are immigrants who have come to America to escape the atrocities of their native countries, hoping to find peace and a better way of life for their families. NDEC has been a “place of hope” for these people. The attack on America, however, has brought back horrifying and traumatic memories for them. Fear has returned to their hearts. Some have chosen to return to their native countries. There is tension and anxiety in the air. How can we make NDEC a safe and comfortable learning environment again?

My students wanted and needed to share their thoughts
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and feelings about what had happened. They decided to write about how these events have been affecting them in order to share them with the NDEC community. During computer classes, students wrote, illustrated and printed their stories. They were then hung on the wall outside the main office for all to read. All students and staff members were encouraged to add their thoughts and feelings to the wall. The result was an effective way of practicing writing skills with the goal of sharing one's feelings about this tragedy.

—*Patricia Hembrough, Computer Instructor,
Notre Dame Education Center*

Country's Response Hurts Immigrants

It was going to be wonderful, awe-inspiring, amazing. It was going to be an opportunity for people from hundreds of different places across the globe, united by their new name of "immigrants," to gather in Washington, D.C., and declare that they deserved legal recognition. It was going to be a day to celebrate the success of an organizing campaign that united immigrants and their supporters across the nation. September 25 should have been a day that the country remembered as the day that millions of Americans marched on the Capitol to demand full amnesty for undocumented people here in the US. Instead, it was just another day, not three weeks after the devastating attack on the World Trade Center.

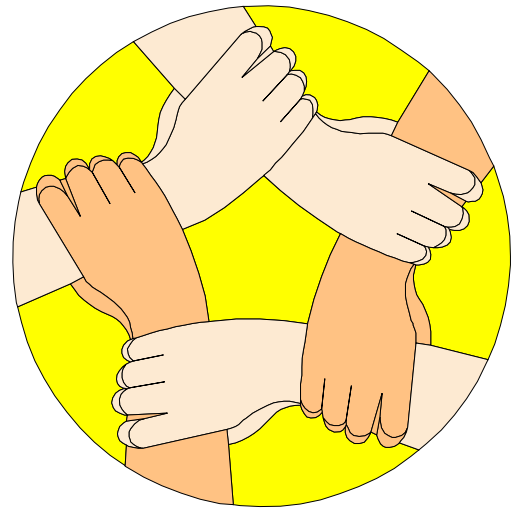
Immigrants and those passionate about immigrant rights have suffered a huge setback in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11th. Many politicians are asserting that slack immigration laws were the indirect cause of the horrifying acts, although Timothy McVeigh managed to wreak great damage on Oklahoma City without ever having to worry about his passport. Now it seems that the House and Senate are on their way to passing laws that outdo even the viciously anti-immigrant law passed in 1996 as a response to that terrorist attack—one that came from our own citizenry. The new bills do not define what a terrorist is, leaving it open to political influence; they also expand the circumstances under which deportation is allowed, expand the time a person can be detained without trial, and limit judicial review. It is already easy for any immigrant with a felony charge to find themselves awaiting deportation; if these bills pass, it will become even easier.

Even if these bills don't pass, and it certainly seems they will, the climate for many of our students has already worsened considerably. Consider: a Lebanese student at UMass/Boston was picked up by the police for renting a car the week of September 11th. The Irish Immigration Center has received anti-immigrant hate mail. A potential donor to the United Way asked if they could ensure the United Way would not spend it on immigrants. Rumors of other incidents abound, and rumor is powerful enough to keep people

at home behind locked doors.

Despite the increasing fear, some immigrants are not willing to sit and cower. The Legalization Coalition, the national group that planned the march on Washington, is holding a retreat this month to plan their next steps; the local affiliate held a march and vigil in East Boston, and members are discussing further actions. The ACLU is fighting the anti-terrorist bills in Congress. Meanwhile, all over Massachusetts, our students are taking the courageous step of continuing to come to ESOL classes.

—*Amy Battisti-Ashé, Immigrant Rights Representative,
Worker Education Roundtable*



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Please send all material for the newsletter to the editor, Steve Reuys, at the A.L.R.I. (E-mail address: steve@alri.org; regular mail address: see last page of this issue. If sending by regular mail, please include, if possible, a computer disk (Mac or PC) with material saved as a "text only" document.) For more information or for permission to reprint articles, please call Steve at 617-782-8956 x14. Complete issues of this newsletter published since March, 1998, can be found in PDF format in the "Publications" section of our web page at: <http://www.alri.org>. Individual articles published since May, 1996, can also be found there in HTML format.

Thinking and Talking about Learning

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My inquiry question was: What happens when I introduce my low level students to the concepts of the Developing Strategies and Resources for Learning strand as a way for them to become better learners? I have always been interested in how people learn and how learning styles relate to cognitive, educational, cultural and personality differences, but I felt that I had not explicitly taught this strand and wanted to challenge myself to try to. A major problem in my work in Level One classes is always how to manage such a mixture of native literacy levels and of classroom experience, so I also saw this as a way to help my students understand this issue and help us find solutions. Also my students are just generally hungry for ways to learn better or faster but we never address this directly.

I had planned to do the following introductory activity and then tackle each standard one at a time, but this ended up getting us into it in a better way, asking them for the information rather than telling them. I actually spent a large part of three consecutive class days on this “introduction.” First, we talked about the difference between “study” and “learn” so that they really understood that “learn” means “remember and integrate,” not just “go through the motions in class.” You can study without learning and you can learn without studying. (This is especially clear with examples like cooking or driving or swimming.) Then I put up a sketch of a person. I said, “She is a very good learner and she studied in Level One before she moved to Level Two very quickly because she learned English very quickly. Tell me about her. What does she do in class? What does she do at home? In the subway? When she is trying to speak English with people? What does she have with her?” We had a nice discussion; it was fun and my students impressed me. They touched on most of the things I was hoping they would. In preparation I had drawn some pictures to illustrate the things I thought/hoped would come up. As they mentioned things, I put the picture up or I made a quick drawing or I took notes on the board—all as a way of keeping track of the points they made without a lot of language.

The second day I asked what the various pictures were—what had we said yesterday about our ideal student?—as a kind of review and to see what stuck and how it got interpreted. They easily went back and forth between things she did and things they did or think they should do and why.

We ended up talking in detail about what kinds of background knowledge would help people learn English and examples of cognates and near-cognates for different language groups. They emphasized class attendance and coming on time, which they have seen correlate with language skill. They talked about homework and study habits. They clearly acknowledged the distracting counter-productive environments many of them have to study

in and said that our star learner must be young and single! It took awhile for them to think of ways she learns besides “listening to the teacher,” but they did come up with “reading signs in the subway,” “recording in notebooks outside of class,” and “listening to other students speak English.”

I was quite excited by the range of ideas and the students’ ability to articulate the ideas well enough for me to connect them with strategies I had been reading about. I took the opportunity to elaborate on different kinds of “intelligence” when they said “intelligent” and on the idea of schema-building or scaffolding when they said “use my language.” I tried to elicit ways of remembering

words other than “writing them” or “repeating them” and ways to use notebooks other than copying off the board, but that they didn’t bite and I didn’t feel prepared enough to teach them specific mnemonic devices or mind maps at that time.

The third day we talked about skills: job skills, study skills, learning skills. I found myself using my Somali students who had no education as examples. They had lots of language learning skills (great memory, guessing from context, asking for help, clarification and frequent feedback, etc.), but skills for writing and studying (noticing capital letters and punctuation, filling in blanks, copying quickly, etc.) were hard for them. (I think they took this well.) Then I tried to categorize the pictures we had into categories that reflected the seven standards found under Developing Strategies and Resources for Learning, but I decided not to emphasize that. Most everything they had mentioned was useful in both formal educational settings (in class and on homework, standard #3) and in informal learning situations (#4). Some of it was attitudinal (which I see as coming under #6, managing feelings). They still did not come up with goal-setting (#1) or discovering your own learning strengths, weaknesses, or preferences (#5).

At this point I got stymied by two things (though in retrospect I think in fact things were working better than I

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NEWS FROM THE A.L.R.I.

A.L.R.I. Staff Update

We want to welcome our new part-time Office Assistant, Julie Bures, who will be helping out with a whole range of things here in the office. We're very glad to have you, Julie! To keep you up to date, here's a complete list of all our staff and how to reach us by phone (extensions are listed; we're all at 617-782-8956) and by e-mail:

David Rosen, Director, x12, djrosen@massed.net

Amanda Kennedy, Office Manager, x11, amanda@alri.org

Julie Bures, Office Assistant, x10, julie@alri.org

Maria Elena González, SABES Coordinator, x15, maria@alri.org

Steve Reuys, Staff Development Coordinator, x14, steve@alri.org

Sandra Darling, Librarian, x19, sandra@alri.org

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Katy Hartnett, ESOL Specialist and Curriculum/Assessment Coordinator, x16, katy@alri.org

Deborah Schwartz, Homebuying Readiness Coordinator, x20, deborah@alri.org

Ernest Best, MassAAL Director, x13, ernest@alri.org

Larry Syms, Technology VISTA, x17, Lamu4@hotmail.com

In the A.L.R.I. Library

These new materials on Irish-Americans and Caribbean-Americans can be found in the library, all in the new book area, except where noted.

The Irish In America, edited by Michael Coffey, with text by Terry Golway (Hyperion, 1997). Hundreds of photographs and illustrations and essays by Irish-American writers and historians. Companion volume to the PBS series that the library also owns.

The Irish American Family Album, by Dorothy Hoobler and Thomas Hoobler (Oxford University Press, 1995). The history of Irish immigration told through letters, photographs, diaries and interviews.

All Souls: A Family Story from Southie, by Michael P. MacDonald (Beacon Press, 1999). Violence and poverty are the real threats of growing up in South Boston.

Angela's Ashes: A Memoir, by Frank McCourt (Touchstone, 1996).

'Tis: A Memoir, by Frank McCourt (Touchstone, 1999). An Irish story, an American story, a teacher's story.

Caribbean Food: Makin' de Rounds: Teaching Materials for Use with Students in Adult Basic Education (Language & Literacy Unit, Southwark College, London). Food is the theme for language lessons in vocabulary, idiom, grammar and punctuation (in British English).

Caribbean English and the Literacy Tutor: A Manual (Toronto ALFA Centre). Information for teachers and tutors on the roots and nuances of Caribbean languages and cultures. Includes a cassette with poetry, songs and

folktales.

Latino Caribbean Literature (Globe Fearon). Fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama from Puerto Rican, Cuban and Dominican authors. (Library catalog PS 508.W44 L38 1994)

Caribbean Connections: Classroom Resources for Secondary Schools: Overview of Regional History, edited by Catherine A. Sunshine and Deborah Menkart. (Ecumenical Program on Central American and the Caribbean and Network of Educators on Central America, 1991). Authentic, relevant and contemporary readings. Suggested activities, discussion questions and teacher information connect these resources to the classroom.

—Sandra Darling, A.L.R.I. Librarian

Thinking and Talking About Learning

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thought and I was learning a lot about students' understanding of their own learning process). First was the workshop that had been set up to help me and other participants with our projects. The presenters had spent an entire year on their Multiple Intelligences project with low-level learners. They had decided not to talk to students directly about MI categories and used the variety of lessons they did over time as a context for students to reflect back on what helped them individually and on their strengths and weaknesses. I realized that I needed to do that as well but would likely be interrupted in that process because of the second issue. As a result of attrition, funding pressure, rolling admissions, and long waiting lists, I was obliged to accept many new students into the class (to total about one-third of the group), some of whom were at a much lower level than the rest. I did not quite know how to spend time on the project other than continuing to give everyone common experiences to reflect back on. I was already worried enough about orienting the new people and also keeping the original students happy without having to try to explain learning skills and styles again.

Looking back, the discussions we had at the time about the progress of the older learners (who might be able to move up and when) and their questioning of the review I was doing to help the new students adjust was actually a way to do some of what I was thinking we wouldn't manage to do. One learner in particular was reminiscing rather exuberantly about how she had been when she arrived in class in September. She had been extremely quiet and shy, and she acted out how she would nod "yes" when she had not at all understood and had actually felt completely lost. She could look back on that now because she was no longer shy and retiring and could actually help the new people who were now in the same situation. In fact, she volunteered to be in the group of students from all levels from which one name would be drawn as graduation speaker!

RE: LEARNER PERSISTENCE

[Participants in our most recent "Orientation for New Adult Education Staff" were asked to write a response to a report from NCSALL that discussed the factors which can help support student persistence in attending class. Here's what a couple of these new teachers wrote.]

The Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center mainly services long-time immigrants in Boston. Many of these immigrants are of Chinese descent and have lived in Boston for 8+ years. Their main goal in life is to survive in America, i.e., feed their children and have a safe home to live in. Thus the aspect of persistence in their learning of survival skills comes first through educating them about these four supports: positive and negative goals, self-efficacy, setting goals, and making measurable progress.

The most significant support for our population of students is awareness and management of positive and negative forces that hinder persistence. We learn to survive by seeking ways to counter negative forces in our daily life. But many immigrants lack those resources to know how to do that. For instance, one great barrier that prevents some students from advancing in their learning is their status in the U.S. One student has great potential to eventually attend university. But the problem is she came as a wife of a student, and thus she's not allowed to work or have appropriate status to attend higher education. She came to me and expressed her "persistence" in wanting to continue to learn English until it's time for her to receive status. She was somewhat stressed in seeking an appropriate place for her to learn English. She also has physical ailments that sometimes make it difficult for her to read and write. What encouraged me about this student was she has such determination that even this negative force doesn't stop her. She's now enrolled in another English program as well as training to become a TAG (Take and Give) peer tutor. This student recognizes her positive and negative forces and will not allow her negative force to limit her other options.

But we do have students who just do not look beyond their own circle. They view their negative forces in great proportion to their positive ones. This kind of student is much harder to reach because their perspective is much narrower and unwilling to look outside of their circle. In this case, it's a matter of time to change their minds or work on a smaller scale to let students recognize that negative forces can be dealt with.

This article has been helpful and I intend to work with my students (higher level) on accomplishing the goals they've set for themselves.

—Anna Fan, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center

As an instructor in an adult basic education program located inside of a prison, I witness positive and negative forces that affect learners persistence on a daily basis. Unfor-

tunately, the negatives seem to overwhelm the positives at times, but these positives are still strong and compelling. Within my classroom I strive to incorporate all four of the suggested support areas in order to maximize student motivation and persistence. Through several different-themed units these learners explore and define goals related to themselves (as learners), their communities, and their careers. Although there is this thread of goal-oriented projects throughout classroom planning and practice, I would love to see more done to encourage learner persistence and enhance learner achievement.

Individual education goals are addressed several different ways. Upon entering the class, students are required to fill out a self-evaluation/inventory. The inventory informally addresses matters such as interests, reasons for seeking education, short term (class) goals, and long-term (career/life) goals. I feel this helps students to pinpoint individual needs and priorities and helps in planning student centered learning. Unfortunately some of my students are new to this concept of setting goals, so follow-ups are necessary. Lessons such as how to set and obtain measured realistic goals are often valuable. Progress is measured through self-assessment, portfolio evaluation, and instructor observation.

In a separate lesson students are asked to identify and relate concerns within their external communities, then outline measurable steps necessary to meeting these challenges. Students write mission statements and concrete, realistic examples of how they can improve their respective communities. I feel this is an important, goal-oriented activity that requires individuals to step outside of themselves and recognize the community at large. This can be a challenging but productive exercise that allows movement from cynicism and helplessness to understanding and empowerment. In another career unit students dive into personal, skill, job need inventories in order to better understand and establish career goals. The unit continues by introducing students to the information and tools that allow them to gain confidence and motivation in meeting their goals.

I feel these activities work well and support the NCSALL finding that persistence is supported by goal establishment on behalf of the students. I have seen its ability to redirect students' attention and energy. I have also seen how it can fall short of expectations when resources (time, staff, funding) are limited and student reluctance exists. If additional resources were available I feel we would experience better overall results in student persistence and achievement. Presently our facility does not have a full-time counselor who handles students' needs. The responsibility is then placed on the teachers, who are often extremely busy with other educational and administrative demands. These teachers are too busy to thoroughly assist students with their counseling needs. An additional staff member could regularly meet with students to assess progress, redefine goals, and outline steps to meet these goals.

—Jill Paquette, Suffolk County House of Correction

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

ABE Teacher's License Becomes Available

After 20-plus years of debate and two and a half years of intensive development work, on October 1, 2001, the Office of Teacher Licensure at the Massachusetts Department of Education began offering a voluntary license for adult basic education teachers. Requirements for the license depend upon years of ABE teaching experience or Massachusetts teacher's license already held. A "Route to Licensure" chart is available at the DOE website, <www.doe.mass.edu/acls/certification.html>. Applications are \$100 for first time Massachusetts teacher applicants and \$25 for anyone who has previously applied for a Massachusetts teacher's license.

Under the ABE licensure regulations, there are two avenues through which new or experienced teachers may become licensed: a Department approved ABE teacher preparation program or an ABE Review Panel offered by the Department. Since there are currently no approved teacher preparation programs for ABE, in the short-term the ABE Review Panel is the only way candidates may become licensed. The panel will consist of experienced ABE teachers and administrators and (eventually) staff from approved ABE teacher preparation programs. Licensure candidates will develop performance portfolios in which they demonstrate competence in any professional standards they have not fulfilled through coursework. The Review Panel will be ready to review their first performance portfolios early next year. (*Reprinted, slightly edited, from the October issue of the ABE License Update. All issues of the Update can be found at <www.doe.mass.edu/acls> or <www.sabes.org>.*)

SABES CRC Staffing Change

Sally Waldron has served SABES since its inception as the Director of the Central Resource Center at World Education in Boston (and thus as something of an overall coordinator of SABES statewide). For a few years now, she has also been wearing another hat at World Education, as Vice-President for its Literacy Division. This fall, she decided to move out of her SABES role in order to devote her energies full-time to her other duties at World Ed. So we're not losing her from the literacy field, but we are losing her from SABES, where she will be greatly missed. Best of luck, Sally, in your (quasi-)new position! (A hiring process is underway, and a new CRC Director should be chosen in a few weeks.)

Math & Science Teaching Info Available

The Eisenhower National Clearinghouse in Columbus, Ohio, is funded by the U.S. Department of Education to collect, catalog, and disseminate information on curriculum resources for K-12 math and science education, and much of this material would also be of use in adult basic education. It publishes a free quarterly magazine, *ENC Focus*, recent issues of which have looked at New Horizons in Math and Science

Education, Becoming Literate in Mathematics and Science, Teaching in the Standards-Based Classroom, Math and Science in the Real World, and Assessment that Informs Practice, among other topics. You can subscribe by going to their website at <www.enc.org> or calling them at 800-621-5785.



One Perspective on High-Stakes Testing

(Excerpt from a 1998 radio commentary in Chicago by Daniel Ferri, a sixth grade teacher in Illinois.)

At best, the tests are a waste of money. Measuring the richness of learning by giving a standardized test is like judging chili by counting the beans. Yet somewhere along the way, we stopped thinking of test scores as a tool and started thinking of them as a goal.

In Illinois, so much rides on these scores—from local property values to the long-term funding schools receive from the state—that teachers are encouraged to teach the tests rather than the knowledge and skills the tests are supposed to measure. For example, scoring well on the "language arts" exam has nothing to do with writing critically or creatively; it has everything to do with writing by the numbers. According to the writing format, the first paragraph of an essay must do this, this, this, and this. The three main body paragraphs must do that, that, that, and that. The conclusion paragraph must begin with two this's followed by three that's and end with an exciting this. These are just the rules for a persuasive essay. There are different rules for writing expository and narrative essays.

The kids hate it. The best writers especially hate it. This is not how people write; it is how they fill out tax forms. "Mr Ferri," my students ask, "what if we want to tell our story a different way?" I explain that our state legislature decided we must have standards of instruction. The children stare at me. I tell them about basics of form that once mastered can be improvised upon. They keep staring. Finally, I say, "Look, neither of us has a choice about this: I have to give you this test, you have to take it, and some poor soul in North Carolina has to read and grade 500 of them a day. The graders don't care what you write; they only care about the rules. If you don't follow the rules, they lower your score. The scores are printed in the newspaper. If they're bad, people will think our school is bad and they won't want to move here, which will make the real estate people mad, and they will yell at the school board, who will yell at the superintendent, who will yell at the principal, who will yell at me. This is not about writing, it is about not getting yelled at." This they understand.

SOME 9/11 RESOURCES

The following are some of the websites where useful material can be found:

Literacy Assistance Center of New York City:
www.lacnyc.org/resources/wtc/resources.htm

National Clearinghouse on Bilingual Education:
www.ncbe.gwu.edu/library/tolerance.htm

Center for Applied Linguistics: <www.cal.org/front/911.html

ERIC: www.askeric.org/cgi-bin/printresponses.cgi/Virtual/Qa/archives/Subjects/Social_Studies/Current_Events/tragedy.html

Spring Institute: www.springinstitute.com/pages/whatsnews.html (includes Tips for Teachers in Times of Trauma)

Education Development Center: www.edc.org/spotlight/schools/beyondblame.htm (a new curriculum responding to the 9/11 events)

Teaching Tolerance: www.tolerance.org/teach/index.jsp

Facing History and Ourselves: www.facinghistory.org

PBS: www.pbs.org/americaresponds/educators.html

United Federation of Teachers: www.ufttc.org/tolerance.html

ArabNet: www.arab.net (news from the Arab world)

IslamZine: www.islamzine.com (information on Islam)

Islamic Society of Boston: www.isboston.org

The organization Women Make Movies is providing free rentals through December 31, 2001, on a selected group of videos dealing with the Middle East, the Arab-American community, and Islam. Renters need pay only basic shipping and handling fees. To find out more, visit their website at <www.wmm.com>.

The A.L.R.I. library has a curriculum and audio-tape called *Scarves of Many Colors: Muslim Women and the Veil*, which explores stereotypes of covered women and stereotypes in general and the different meanings of "freedom."

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